

The Practice of Pastoral Care: a Literary Approach
PC3103 Tues, Th 1:30-2:50
Schlegel Hall 123

Instructor

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This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.

Course description

This course attends to the basic dimensions of care-giving relationships: modes of communication, the importance of boundaries, pastoral authority and power dynamics, and seeking healing and justice. Novels, memoirs, film, and poetry will be used to facilitate learners' encounter with sameness and "otherness" and to provide resources for expanding capacities for empathy, care, and theological reflection. Subjects covered revolve around the changing nature of intimate relationships and family dynamics as they are influenced by cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity, experiences of grief and loss, family secrets, abuse, addictions, aging, and the challenge of forgiveness. The course material utilizes a contextual, systemic, and intercultural approach to pastoral theology and the practice of pastoral care.

Objectives

1. to help pastoral care-givers further form their vocational identity, pastoral care responses, and the capacity for theological reflection on situations of ministry
2. to provide opportunities to practice empathy with those experienced as "other"
3. to expose students to contemporary theories of narrative, contextual, and intercultural pastoral theology and the practices of care that are informed by them

Use of Inclusive Language

Learning is fundamentally concerned with communication, self-expression, and personal and social transformation. Learning respects individuals, their feelings, their value and worth, and their particular potential for contribution to common knowledge and community virtue. Learning is fundamentally and intentionally inclusive.

Since all learning is inherently ethical and political, and theological discourse has been traditionally patriarchal and gender exclusive, the Seminary has established a policy, in the interest of constructing an inclusive and egalitarian community, that the language (symbols, metaphors) used in our class discussions and written work shall be gender inclusive and respectful of all persons and groups as valued human creatures of God.

Racism also permeates our society and is detrimental to any learning environment. We need to use language, symbols, and metaphors that honor our commitment to racial inclusiveness.

Academic Honesty

Be careful to fully document any information included in your papers that is not original.

Also be aware that when you summarize information, even when you give the complete documentation information, your summaries should be in your own words and not retain too much of the original author's style.

A paper that presents the ideas or writing of someone else as if they were your own is considered plagiarism, and school and departmental policies on academic honesty will be followed.

The Academic Support Center has handouts, and/or the Library can be of assistance.

Evaluation of written assignments

Graduate level writing is expected in this course. This includes clear organization, correct grammar, careful proofreading and proper citation of sources. In line with seminary policy, you must **use either Chicago/Turabian or APA documentation style for your papers.** Double-spaced, 12 font, one inch margins are considered standard in this class unless otherwise specified. Grading of all written material will be affected by careless writing. The Academic Support Center provides instruction in all of these matters.

Tutors are available to work with you on study habits, reading skills, and writing assignments.

Attendance

In line with seminary policy, prompt attendance at class sessions is expected out of respect for your fellow classmates as well as the instructor. Learning is a complex activity that requires conceptual and experiential participation by those who wish to learn. While circumstances may require an adult learner to miss class occasionally, absence from more than 10% of the classroom experience will affect student learning and consequently, the student's grade. Extreme circumstances, such as major health problems, family concerns, etc., must be discussed with the professor **prior** to multiple missed classes. Students unable to attend at least 75% of classes are advised to drop the class prior to the registrar's WP deadline, or receive a failing grade.

ThM and DMin students

must meet with the instructor to design an additional class project in the form of a presentation and/or paper.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Course requirements and evaluation as related to assessing fulfillment of course objections:

1. **Verbatim (20%).** Write a 3-4 page verbatim, plus 3-4 pages of analysis following the directions given by Doehring, Exercises 1& 2, pp. 33-34.
2. **Three 2-3 page double spaced papers (30%)** written in response to the film and/or readings assigned for the day. Discuss similarities and differences between your cultural background and life experience and those presented in the film or readings. How has your understanding of yourself, others, God, and sense of ministry been affected by these encounters?
3. **Final project (30%).** In a 10-12 page paper, revisit one of the course books or films and select a theme central to its content to explore more fully. Incorporate information and analysis from the social-sciences related to this theme, an understanding of pastoral care that guides your pastoral assessment and suggested interventions, and how engaging this theme theologically affects your sense of vocation, and practice of ministry.
4. **Participation (20%).** Contributing to the learning of all is expected and will be evaluated by the following criteria:
 - a. accurate use of reading material assigned
 - b. attention to and ability to appropriately engage the contributions of classmates
 - c. openness to reflecting critically on the implications and ideas discussed from readings and presentations
 - d. prompt, regular attendance; absences and/or tardiness will impact your participation grade
 - e. on a selected date, come prepared to co-lead the class in a 45-50 minute discussion of the readings or film assigned for that date. One of your 3 short papers will be due on this date. Engage the class in a discussion of the systemic, pastoral, and theological issues that are present in the assigned encounter. Which of these present the most ministerial challenges for the students?

Assigned readings:

- Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, & Company, 2007.
- Ashby, Jr., Homer U. "A Vision for the Future with Hope." In *Our Home is Over Jordan: A Black Pastoral Theology*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003. pp. 127-152.
- Billman, Kathleen D. "Pastoral Care as an Art of Community." In *The Arts of Ministry: Feminist-Womanist Approaches*, ed. Christie Cozad Neuger. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. pp. 10-38.
- Capps, Donald. *The Poet's Gift: Toward the Renewal of Pastoral Care*. Louisville: WJKP, 1993.
- Copeland, Shawn M. "Wading through Many Sorrows:" Toward a Theology of Suffering in Womanist Perspective." In "A Troubling in my Soul:" *Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*, ed. Emilie M. Townes. New York: Orbis Books, 1993. pp. 109-129.

- Cunningham, David S. "He Will Come to Judge the Living and the Dead." In *Reading is Believing: The Christian Faith through Literature and Film*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002. pp. 133-148.
- Cunningham, David S. "Trinitarian Rhetoric in Murdoch, Morrison, and Dostoevsky." In *Literature & Theology at Century's End*, ed. Gregory Salyer and Robert Detweiler. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995. pp. 196-203.
- Doehring, Carrie. *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach*. Louisville: WJKP, 2006.
- Erdrich, Louise. "Satan: Hijacker of a Planet." In *Listening for God, Vol. 3*, ed. Paula J. Carlson and Peter S. Hawkins. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000. pp. 116-124.
- Hawxhurst, Joan C. *Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources*. Kalamazoo: Dovetail Publishing, 1996.
- Lartey, Emmanuel Y. "Approaches to Pastoral Care in Pluralistic Settings." In *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 2nd ed. London and New York: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003. pp. 163-177.
- Marshall, Joretta. "Communal Dimensions of Forgiveness: Learning from the Life and Death of Matthew Shephard." *The Journal of Pastoral Theology* (1999): 49-61.
- Miller, Sue. *The Story of My Father*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003.
- Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York: Penguin, 1987.
- Paterson, Katherine. *The Great Gilly Hopkins*. New York: Harper Collins, 1978.
- Paterson, Katherine. "Image and Imagination." In *Shouts and Whispers: Twenty-one Writers Speak about their Writing and their Faith*, ed. Jennifer L. Holberg. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006. pp. 13-28.
- Swenson, Erin K. "Pastoral Care in Transgender Experience." Handout, pp. 1-10.
- Tigert, Leanne McCall. *Coming Out While Staying In: Struggles and Celebrations of Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals in the Church*. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1996.
- Tyler, Anne. *Digging to America*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

Films assigned

- 51 Birch Street
- One True Thing
- Smoke Signals
- TransAmerica
- Affliction

Class Schedule

Th 2/7	Introductions	
<u>Week 1</u>	The practice of pastoral care	
T 2/12	Billman, "Pastoral Care as an Art of Community" (BB) Doehring, Introduction and Conclusion, pp. 1-13; 165-170	
Th 2/14	Doehring, Chapters 1 & 2 Capps, Introduction and Chapter 1	
<u>Week 2</u>	The care-giver's story	
T 2/19	Doehring, Chapter 3 Capps, Chapter 2 <i>Due: Verbatim and analysis (bring two copies to class of verbatim only)</i>	
Th 2/21	Bibliographic Instruction with Angela Morris in the Library Lab	
<u>Week 3</u>	Professional boundaries	
T 2/26	Doehring, Chapter 4 Erdrich, "Satan: Hijacker of a Planet" (BB)	
Th 2/28	Psychological assessment: Grief and Loss Doehring, Chapter 5 Capps, Chapter 3	
<u>Week 4</u>		
T 3/4	Discuss "One True Thing" in light of Exercise 5 in Doehring, pp. 93-95	
Th 3/6	Discuss Miller in light of Exercise 5 in Doehring, pp. 93-95	_____ _____
<u>Week 5</u>	Systemic assessment	
T 3/11	Doehring, Chapter 6, pp. 97-104 Alexie	_____ _____
Th 3/13	Discuss "Smoke-signals" Marshall, "Communal Dimensions of Forgiveness" (BB)	_____ _____

Week 6 **Assessing family of origin**

T 3/18 Doehring, Chapter 6, pp. 105-106 _____
Discuss “51 Birch Street” _____

Th 3/20 **EASTER**

March 24-28 RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK

Week 7 **Assessing intimate partnerships from a multicultural perspective**

T 4/1 Doehring, Chapter 6, pp. 107-110
Lartey, “Approaches to Pastoral Care in Pluralistic Settings” (BB) _____
Tyler _____

Th 4/3 Tyler continued

Week 8 **Theological Reflection**

T 4/8 Doehring, Chapter 7
Copeland, “Wading Through Many Sorrows” (BB)
Morrison

Th 4/10 Morrison continued
Cunningham, “He Will Come to Judge the Living and the Dead” (BB)
Cunningham, “Trinitarian Rhetoric ...” (BB)

Week 9 **Seeking healing and justice**

T 4/15 Morrison continued _____
Ashby, “A Vision for the Future with Hope” (BB) _____

Th 4/17 Capps, Chapter 4

Week 10 **Attending to the marginalized**

T 4/22 Doehring, Chapter 8
Paterson, *The Great Gilly Hopkins* _____
Paterson, “Image and Imagination” (BB) _____

Th 4/24 Swenson, “Pastoral Care in Transgender Experience” (BB) _____
Discuss “Transamerica” _____

Week 11 **Liberative pastoral care**

T 4/29 Tigert

Th 5/1 Capps, Chapter 5

Week 12 **Bringing it together**

T 5/6 Doehring, Chapter 9
Discuss “Affliction”

Th 5/8 “Affliction” continued

Final papers due Wed, May 14, 5:00 in my office for seniors
Fri, May 16, 5:00 in my office for others